Vancouver metro
Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, MAY 22-24, 2015

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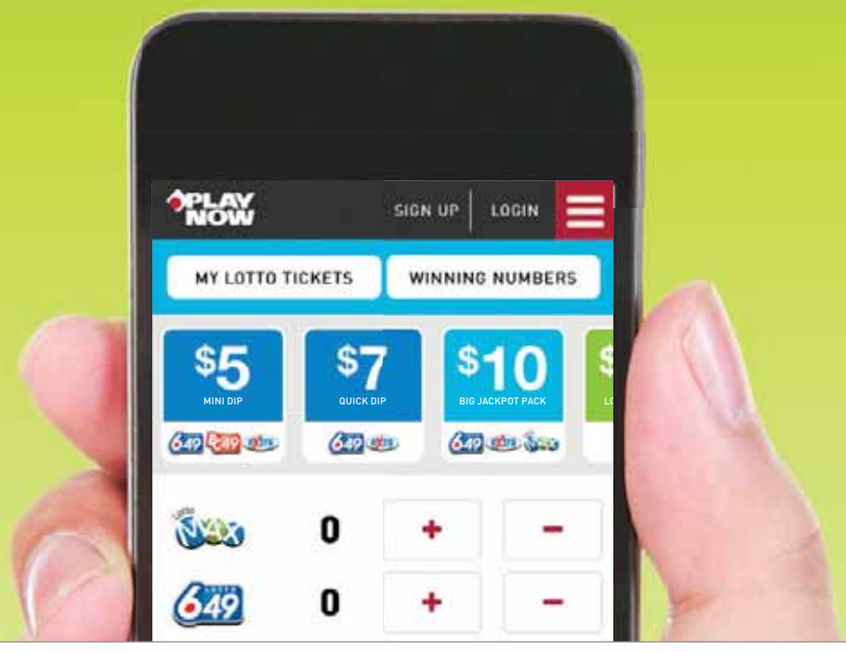

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IN CHOPPY WATERS

B.C. Ferries' social media flop

metroNEWS

Vancouver metro

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, MAY 22-24, 2015 | High 19°C/Low 14°C Cloudy

THE MYSTERY OF TOMORROWLAND

metroLIFE

Foster 101

Victoria-born music star David Foster, who is being honoured as the University of Victoria's Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year, will share his secrets for success when he talks to students on May 28. Story in metroNEWS. COURTESY DAVID FOSTER FOUNDATION

City wins condo appeal

YALETOWN

Earlier ruling had quashed land-swap deal

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

Developers can breathe a sigh of relief over the future of their downtown Vancouver projects after the B.C. Court of Appeal overturned a judgment that delayed a massive condo project in Yaletown.

The Supreme Court ruled earlier this year that the City of Vancouver was too secretive about a deal with Brenhill Developments to exchange extra density for a condo at 508 Helmcken St. for social housing at 1099 Richards St. The judge quashed the rezoning bylaw, stopping construction when Brenhill Developments had already spent millions.

But the B.C. Court of Appeal sided with the city, which appealed the decision because it threw at least 10 developments at risk and left "very significant uncertainty" about what must be revealed to the public and what can remain behind closed doors in negotiations with developers.

Chief Justice Robert Bauman ruled the chambers judge made legal errors and that "the city met — and indeed exceeded — its disclosure obligations," according to reasons released Thursday.

Bauman said residents should turn to politics, not the courts, to seek change.

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metro NEWS
Your essential daily news

Ireland votes on gay marriage. World

Parade organizers urging support for trans equality

LGBTQ ISSUES

Vancouver Pride Society aims to push for legislation

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

A new campaign by organizers of the Vancouver Pride Parade is asking all parade participants this year to pledge public support for transgender equality legislation.

The mandatory pledge is the first part of the Vancouver Pride Society's Trans Equality Now campaign, launched Thursday at a media event in Davie Village, which aims to lobby the provincial and federal governments to enact legal protections for trans and gender-variant Canadians, as well as educate the public on issues affecting the trans community.

Bry Leckie, parade co-ordinator for the Vancouver Pride Society, said the pledge is both a petition and a pledge of support for transgender Canadians. While the push for gay rights has made remarkable progress, Leckie said trans people continue to face discrimination and exclusion.

"For everyone in the pride community, it's not acceptable that some of us are left behind," she told Metro.

Bry Leckie, parade co-ordinator for the Vancouver Pride Society, was among the first to pledge her support for transgender equality legislation in Vancouver on Thursday. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

"Things certainly are better for trans people now, but there's still work to be done."

Organizers said the Trans Equality Now campaign is a response to an amendment introduced by Conservative Sen. Donald Plett in February that would limit the effectiveness of Bill C-279, a private member's bill that seeks to fight hate crimes against transgender individuals by adding gender identity provisions to both the Criminal Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Sen. Plett's amendment would prevent transgender people from entering single-sex washrooms, change rooms or abuse shelters under federal jurisdiction.

Vancouver-West End MLA Spencer Chandra Herbert, who was among several local politicians who signed the pledge Thursday, described the amendment as "transphobic."

"The amendment is about making it more difficult for transgender people to use bathrooms and basic things that everybody else takes for granted," he said. "It's clearly designed to stop the bill."

Chandra Herbert said he hopes the Trans Equality Now campaign and the pledge for Pride Parade participants will encourage politicians of all stripes to support transgender equality legislation.

"It's no longer enough just to stand with a rainbow flag and pretend to be an ally — you actually have to demonstrate your willingness to be one," said Chandra Herbert.

"If you're a government that is trying to stall legislation that would ensure trans folks have protection under the hate crimes legislation, and you don't want to allow that, you probably shouldn't be in the Pride Parade."

While all entries to this year's Pride Parade will be encouraged to sign the pledge, Leckie said special exceptions will be made for organizations that receive funding from federal ministries and are not able to speak out for causes that its funders may find controversial.

"We're certainly not going to deprive a charity of marching in the pride parade just because some politicians decide it's too political of a statement," she said.

TRANSPORTATION

No cuts to ferry service

BC Ferries says it will scuttle plans to trim services on its money-making routes between Vancouver Island and British Columbia's mainland and instead will find other ways to cut $4.9 million.

> **"... it just wouldn't benefit the system at all to be cutting any more service.**
> Deborah Marshall,
> BC Ferries spokesperson

Ferries spokeswoman Deborah Marshall said Thursday the major routes earn up to 80 per cent of company revenues, while the minor routes on the Gulf Islands and at northern ports are traditional money losers.

Marshall said cuts to the Vancouver Island to Metro Vancouver routes would hurt the company's bottom line because it means fewer customers.

"We earn 80 per cent of our revenues on the majors," she said. "That's where we definitely see the high-traffic volume. The major routes cross subsidize the minor routes."

Sailings were reduced on 16 of the smaller routes last spring. Marshall said since 2008, major routes were cut by eight per cent, including the cancellation of some weekend sailings.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

City aims to encourage building rental units

HOUSING

Development fee to be waived in exchange for cheaper prices

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

Renting is cheaper than buying, so the City of Vancouver wants to update its rules to encourage developers to build rental units instead of condos.

It's a refresh of the December 2013 bylaws stating if developers keep rents below a certain level for an entire building of so-called "for-profit, affordable rental housing," the city will waive the development cost levies that help pay for facilities and services such as parks, childcare and social housing.

Under the proposed regime, which council will vote on next week, maximum rents would vary between east and west side apartments and rates for three-bedroom apartments would be included for the first time.

The east-west split is to encourage developers to build rentals on the pricier west side of the city, where only one market rental project has been approved since 2013. (It didn't qualify for the fee waiver because its rents were too high.)

Three-bedroom rates will be introduced into the waiver scheme to give developers an incentive to build units for families, a market that is woefully underserved. Less than one per cent of the city's 55,850 rental units (530) have three bedrooms, according to city research.

Maximum rents would be $1,366 for a studio west of Ontario Street and $1,242 for an east side studio. The studio rates, based on average rents outlined in Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation rental market reports, are actually cheaper than the original maximum of $1,443 introduced in 2013.

For an east side studio to be affordable by CMHC standards — these stipulate a person should spend less than 30 per cent of income on housing — a person would have to make $49,680 a year (assuming only one person would live in a bachelor apartment).

Vancouverites aged 22 to 55 with university degrees have a median income of $41,981, according to research by Andy Yan of Bing Thom Architects.

Maximum rents for one-bedroom units would increase to $1,561 in the east and $1,717 in the west from the 2013 rate of $1,517. Two-bedroom maximum rents would drop to $1,972 in the east and rise to $2,169 in the west from $2,061 in 2013. Three-bedrooms would be $2,338 in the east and $2,572 in the west.

Maximum rents are subject to annual increases outlined by the Residential Tenancy Act.

The Olympic Village in Vancouver pictured in summer 2013. EMILY JACKSON/METRO FILE

WAIVERS

Developers will be able to get the full development cost levy waived if all units in a building meet the rental rates, and a partial waiver if all units except the three-bedrooms meet the standard.

Such waivers are only available for buildings that promise rental units for whatever is longer — 60 years or the life of the building.

UBC

Canada losing precious public housing stock: Study

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

Canada has lost five per cent of its public housing stock since 1990, according to a new UBC study.

Penny Gurstein, the director of UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning, said the federal government's decision to get out of the social housing business in the '90s has resulted in thousands of affordable units being lost.

From 1990 to 2011, the country went from 640,778 units of public housing to 607,038 despite a growing population.

Public housing, whether it be publicly built and operated or subsidized, now makes up just 4.6 per cent of the nation's total housing, down from 6.5 per cent.

Gurstein said Canada's public housing trend is similar to that in many other countries in the Western world, where "neo-Liberal restructuring" of government has greatly scaled back on its role and services to society.

The gradual erosion of housing services on a federal level has been greatly felt in cities like Vancouver, where even low- to middle-income families struggle to keep housing costs affordable, she said.

"It's why you're seeing homelessness in places it hasn't existed before. Homeowners are subsidized in various ways but renters, who can't get into the market, don't get the same kind of benefits," Gurstein said. "When you recognize more than half of the population in Vancouver rents, you're creating a group of people who are disadvantaged."

If government won't directly build housing, Gurstein suggested there are other ways to boost supply of affordable housing, though grants, subsidies and stronger renter protections against abuses such as renovictions.

Canada has among the lowest rates of public housing of the countries UBC collected data from as part of its 20-year survey of public housing trends in North America, Europe and Asia.

Nicholson Towers at 1115 Nelson St. is one of two social housing buildings being sold by BC Housing. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

REPORT

City hits housing targets

Amidst reports of young people fleeing the city for cheaper pastures, and days before a rally decrying the lack of affordable housing, the City of Vancouver announced it is hitting most of its targets to build housing for low- and middle-income residents.

Over the past three years, the city has approved more than 10,000 new affordable housing units including social housing, supportive housing, market rentals, laneway houses and secondary suites. Not all these units are available, but are either completed, under construction, have received a permit or are committed as part of future projects.

"We've met and exceeded all the targets that we had as part of the three-year capital plan," chief housing officer Mukhtar Latif said Thursday. "We've done exceedingly well, bearing in mind the pressures we have in the market."

Building more supply for renters — 20 per cent of housing starts are for rentals, compared to five per cent in 2009, according to the city — is crucial in a city where more than half of residents rent and the vacancy rate sits at 0.5 per cent, Latif said.

Here's a look at the city's progress in different categories:

• Supportive housing
The city is shy of meeting its target for permanent supportive housing, which includes staff on site 24/7, but has provided interim housing to fill the gap.

• Social housing
The city surpassed its social housing target by securing these cheaper rooms as part of larger developments such as the Oakridge Centre.

• Single-room hotels
The city is working with non-profits to build new SROs, mostly in the Downtown Eastside. It's also increasing enforcement on existing SROs, many of which are in bad shape.

• Market rental
The city beat its goal for market rental housing by a whopping 250 per cent, with 3,783 units approved, under construction or completed in the past three years. However, calling these affordable might be a stretch — rents can be up to $1,443 for a studio.

• Laneway and secondary suites
There's apparently more demand for gentler densification. The city issued permits for 2,476 laneway houses and secondary suites, beating its goal of about 1,795 permits.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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The parking lot between Waterfront Station and The Landing could soon be home to a 26-storey tower. It would be the first project under a larger plan to build a platform atop the railroad tracks and extend the public realm to the water. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

Tower could spark waterfront changes

DEVELOPMENT

Former planners ask city to pause on decision the building

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

The proposal to squeeze a 26-storey tower between two historic Gastown buildings could spark massive changes to downtown Vancouver's waterfront, according to the city's head planner.

Cadillac Fairview's controversial plan to build an origami-esque tower next to Waterfront Station has prompted former planners, city staff and developers to dust off six-year-old plans for a central waterfront hub to be built atop the railroad tracks.

The proposal is the first building to be considered under the 2009 plan, city planner Brian Jackson said Thursday.

Despite disagreements over whether it is appropriate for the site, a parking lot with lovely views of the North Shore mountains and the cruise ship terminal, the proposal could kick off change in the area.

"This building will be the catalyst for the area going forward," Jackson said.

But that doesn't mean everyone agrees on the area's future.

Former planners, including Christina DeMarco, released a report this week asking the city to pause its decision on the building to ensure it doesn't hinder plans to extend the public realm to the water's edge by building a platform above the rails.

"We could lose some opportunities if 555 Cordova goes ahead without thinking of all the building blocks for the waterfront," DeMarco said.

"It's such a wonderful opportunity. let's not close opportunities by building that."

Her group is calling on the city to refresh the waterfront plan, particularly where roads would be built. They will meet with city planners next week, according to Jackson.

But he said a building in that location is "absolutely part of the wider context" of the waterfront plan, which took two years to develop.

The plan is complex and "you can't just change one part of it," he said.

The building didn't garner approval from the urban design panel on its first try, but Cadillac Fairview is expected to come back with a tweaked plan.

IN BRIEF

Alpaca jumps from truck, remains on the lam

An apparently agitated alpaca may be on the loose north of Vernon, B.C.

Don Raffen of Valley Auction says the animal jumped from the back of a pickup truck before it was taken inside to be sold.

RCMP Cpl. Mary Seniuk of the detachment in Armstrong says officers corralled the alpaca off a highway and it sprinted away. Seniuk says the "cute" alpaca has likely already been auctioned off.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

WANTED MEN

Offender nabbed drinking at beach

A wanted sex offender who allegedly walked away from a halfway home was arrested while having a drink near Second Beach, police say.

Gary Vogrig, 51, was arrested without incident just before 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Vancouver police say Vogrig is the second of four wanted sex offenders arrested after allegedly leaving their halfway homes in recent weeks.

Richard Galt, 46, was arrested in Abbotsford last week, while police continue to search for Timothy Daniel Jones, 48, and Gerald Richard McLean, 46, who are wanted Canada-wide.

Jones is described as white, six-feet-tall and 224 pounds, with a Pegasus tattoo on his right upper arm.

McLean is described as white, five-foot-seven and 175 pounds with tattoos of an eagle and a tribal band on his arms. a skull on his shoulder and the word "prospector" on his back.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

B.C. Ferries vessel Spirit of Vancouver Island passes between Galiano Island and Mayne Island while traveling from Swartz Bay to Tsawwassen, B.C., on Friday August 26, 2011.
DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C. Ferries' campaign mocked

TRAVEL

People poke fun at firm's contest over fares, services

BC Ferries says its contest to name a new fleet of vessels won't be sunk even as people mock the company's fare costs, service cuts and executive salaries with suggested monikers like "Coastal Cash Grab."

The corporation began its #NameAFerry campaign on Tuesday, asking the public to name three new vessels for a chance to win over $500 in ferry travel.

"We're proud to be introducing three new intermediate class ferries that will become part of our shared culture and history," the company wrote on Facebook.

"Celebrate the beauty of coastal B.C. by submitting your best names."

But cheeky social media users quickly grasped the opportunity to ridicule the quasi-Crown corporation.

A deluge of proposed names has included entries such as "Coastal Community Collapse," "Queen of Increasing Fares" and "Spirit of Unfettered Capitalism."

Another suggestion: "Queen of the Oblivious Marketing Department."

Others opted to ridicule the company's prize, with one Facebook user quipping: "$500? So one round trip with a family then..."

BC Ferries spokeswoman Deborah Marshall said the corporation received over 1,400 entries within 24 hours of launching the campaign, and most of them were serious submissions.

She said the company anticipated some negativity on social media, but the contest will continue as planned, until June 9.

"People have fun on social media," she said.

"We've seen the naming suggestions on social media. We think some of them are quite funny."

Details for the contest are posted on the BC Ferries website.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Man sues rodeo company
A novice rider is suing a rodeo company in Vernon, B.C., over a bull named Slow Poke that he alleges failed to live up to its name and caused him serious injury.

A notice of civil claim in B.C. Supreme Court in Kamloops accuses Coyote Creek Rodeo and its two owners — Ted and Wade Marchand — of negligence resulting in serious injury. Kyle Warman claims he has suffered physical and mental issues which include a concussion, cognitive injuries, anxiety, headaches, a broken wrist, an injured neck and depression.

The company has not filed a statement of defence and none of the allegations have been proven in court.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Court won't pay to clean up demolished murder site
A British Columbia regional district won't pay to clean up the remains of a trailer demolished seven years after a man murdered his three children inside.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

CRIME

Man gets 3 years for drug, theft charges

A Vancouver man has been sentenced to more than three years in prison for administering a stupefying drug on a Surrey man, ransacking his home and stealing the man's SUV.

Brendan Roshinsky, 26, was sentenced to three years and nine months in prison after pleading guilty to spiking a vodka drink with the drug Gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid, which rendered the man unconscious.

Roshinsky also pleaded guilty to stealing the man's valuables, including jewellery, electronics, clothing and a coin collection valued at more than $5,000, as well as the victim's SUV.

"I am greatly disturbed by the predatory aspect of Mr. Roshinsky's conduct, that being his having sought out his victim through a hook-up website," B.C. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Saunders said in his written sentencing decision released Wednesday.

The judge noted that it was effectively a six-year sentence before deducting the 27 months of credit for time served in presentence custody.

The judge said he took into account the fact that Roshinsky, when he committed his latest crimes on Nov. 8, 2012, was on parole for a five-year sentence imposed in 2009 for a home invasion robbery, forcible confinement and theft of a laptop computer and video game console.

His latest crimes stemmed from his posing as a man named "Tom" offering sex for money on a gay Internet dating website.

Roshinsky had a criminal record dating back to 2004 that included convictions for possession and trafficking of drugs, carrying a concealed weapon, mischief, petty theft, failing to comply with probation orders, and stolen property possession offences. NEAL HALL/METRO

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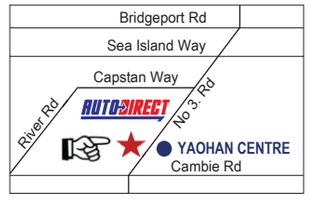

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SO15153	2015	SONATA LIMITED		GREY	$35,019	$31,888
SO15104	2015	SONATA HYBRID LIMITED W/TECH		BLACK	$36,519	$30,888
T15135	2015	TUCSON GL AWD		BLACK	$28,087	$25,888
SF15171	2015	SANTA FE XL LUXURY		GREEN	$41,869	$38,388
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Music producer David Foster speaks in Vancouver in May 2012. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO FILE

David Foster is coming to UVic

POST-SECONDARY

Grammy winner to be honoured for business savvy

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

"Good is the enemy of great."

That is the motto of Victoria, B.C.-born, mega music star David Foster, and will likely be the advice he will pass on to students in his hometown at the University of Victoria next week.

The 16-time Grammy Award-winning musician, businessman and philanthropist, who is being honoured as the university's Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year, will be leading a classroom discussion with entrepreneurship and fine arts students next Thursday.

Pat Elemans, assistant dean at the Gustavson School of Business, said the university chose Foster as the recipient of the award because of his entrepreneurial approach to both his music career and charitable work.

"David is not only an artist and musician but he's also a really successful businessman," she said.

"We want the students to hear about what does it take to be successful."

> **He will push you and push you and push you beyond what you think you can do, and that makes people really great.**
> Pat Elemans

After spending several months in preparation for a gala in Foster's honour interviewing family members, business managers and artists — including Josh Groban — who have worked with him, Elemans said the common theme she heard is that Foster is a "genius."

"He lives by his motto that 'good is the enemy of great,'" she said.

"He will push you and push you and push you beyond what you think you can do, and that makes people really great."

Elemans said the students will have an hour to ask Foster questions about the secrets to his success during the classroom discussion before he attends a gala on Thursday evening.

NEW REPORT

Seniors giving up basic needs to afford housing: Advocate

Even as Lorraine Logan and her partner chip away at their condominium mortgage in New Westminster, B.C., the 70-year-old recognizes they could lose their security and comfort.

"If something happens to one of us?" she said, slapping one hand against the other. "It's got to be sold. Two incomes supporting the mortgage, right? So we're just trying to build up equity before I die!"

The couple is among 93 per cent of British Columbia seniors who are living independently as an aging population faces systemic challenges.

On Thursday, the province's seniors' advocate released a comprehensive report that found housing for older British Columbians must be more affordable, appropriate and available.

Isobel Mackenzie urged the government to accept 18 recommendations after canvassing thousands of seniors across B.C. over the past year.

"I really have made it my mission to disabuse people of this notion that all seniors out there are living high off the hog, on a beach in Barbados, and sucking dry all the hardworking British Columbians," she told a news conference packed with seniors. "There are seniors who need a lot of help and who are in desperate need. That's what happens when you look at the data instead of just deciding what the situation is by looking around at the people you know."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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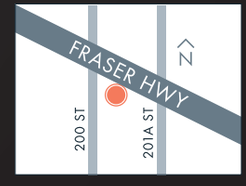

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There can be no reason to join terrorists: PM

PUBLIC SAFETY

Harper heralds new funding to keep closer eye on suspects

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says there is "no legitimate reason of any kind" for Canadians to become involved in jihadist or terrorist movements.

Harper was in Montreal on Thursday to announce funds for the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency in the fight against terrorism.

The RCMP will receive $150.4 million over five years, beginning in 2015-16, and $46.8 million a year after, with the money going to help the Mounties conduct terrorism-related criminal investigations.

The border-services agency will get $5.4 million over five years and $1.1 million annually in subsequent years, with some of the funds earmarked for identifying high-risk travellers.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper in Montreal on Thursday, announcing funds for the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency in the fight against terrorism. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

While the Prime Minister's Office described the money as "new" and "additional," the Finance Department said later the funds had been announced in the recent federal budget, but that the specific details outlined on Thursday for the RCMP and the CBSA were new.

Harper was speaking at Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport, where 10 youths were arrested last weekend after being suspected of wanting to leave Canada to join jihadist groups.

"Obviously we have great sympathy for the families affected, but let us be clear: we have a great country here. We have a country that is unparalleled in terms of its freedom, its democracy, its openness and its tolerance," the prime minister told reporters after making his announcement.

"And there is no legitimate reason of any kind in this country for someone to become a violent jihadist or a terrorist or to join any kind of group that is involved (in) or advocates that kind of activity."

Violent jihadism is not a future trend but a current reality in Canada and around the world, Harper said, adding that the funds will be important in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

In recent days, ISIL militants have been on the advance, seizing the city of Ramadi in Iraq and the central Syrian town of Palmyra.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

FEDERAL ELECTION

Tories snub talk on debates

The game of election debate chicken continues.

The Liberals, NDP, Greens and Bloc have reached an agreement in principle with the TV consortium that has traditionally organized the debates.

The Conservatives were not at a meeting Thursday with the broadcasters. They have agreed — with the NDP — to four other alternative debates with new hosts such as Maclean's magazine and the Munk Debates.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TERRORISM

Osama likely hated my book: Professor

Your average author might be delighted to have a celebrity reader. Barry Cooper's case is a little different: His famous reader was supposedly Osama bin Laden.

"If I had a chance to kill him," the University of Calgary professor says, "I would've."

According to a newly declassified list, the terrorist leader had 39 English-language books in his Pakistani compound when he was killed in 2011. One of those books was written by Cooper: New Political Religions, or an Analysis of Modern Terrorism.

Cooper has no idea whether bin Laden read the stinging rebuke of terrorist thinking.

"I'm sure he didn't like it if he did read it; I can take some comfort in that." THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN THE COURTS

Feds fail to stop challenge over Senate vacancies

The federal government has lost a bid to thwart a court challenge aimed at compelling Prime Minister Stephen Harper to fill Senate vacancies.

The case was launched by Vancouver lawyer Aniz Alani, who maintains the unfilled vacancies are unconstitutional, leaving provinces under-represented and the Senate less able to carry out its constitutional role as the chamber of sober second thought.

Harper has not appointed a senator since March 2013 — when the scandal over improper expenses claimed by some senators began to engulf his government. There are currently 20 vacancies in the 105-seat upper house. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Supreme Court rules on lack of aboriginal jurors

The manslaughter conviction of an aboriginal man should not be overturned because of a lack of aboriginal jurors, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled Thursday.

In a 5-2 decision, the court found that an Ontario community made reasonable efforts to ensure the jury had adequate aboriginal representation — and that what matters is the effort, not the ultimate result.

Clifford Kokopenace had been found guilty of stabbing a friend to death on the Grassy Narrows reserve. His jury was selected from 175 potential jurors, only eight of whom were on-reserve residents. None of those made it on to the jury.

The judgment said there was a significant decline in response rates to the jury notices sent to on-reserve residents in the years leading up to Kokopenace's trial.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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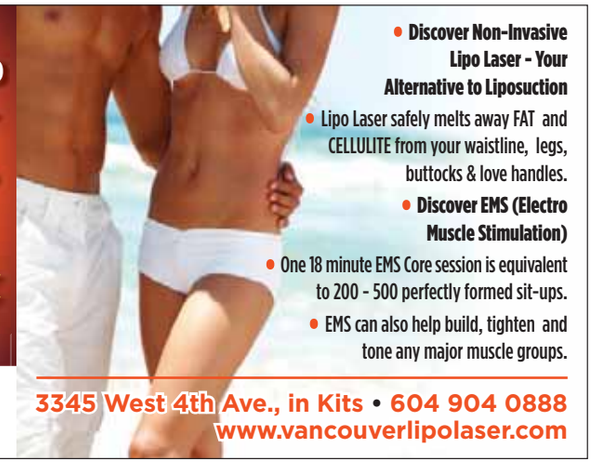

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MIGRANT CRISIS

Malaysia searches for lost boat people

Four Malaysian navy ships began searching the seas for stranded boat people Thursday, in the first official rescue operation since desperate migrants started washing onto Southeast Asia's shores, and a formerly reluctant Myanmar agreed to attend a regional meeting aimed at easing the crisis.

Thousands of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar and Bangladeshis are believed to be trapped on boats with little food or water — some after being pushed back by the navies of at least three countries — and the international community has warned that time to save them is running out.

The announcement Thursday by Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak was the latest in a series of breakthroughs, including an offer by his country and Indonesia to provide temporary shelter to the desperate men, women and children until a more permanent solution is found.

He said he had ordered his navy and coast guard to conduct search-and-rescue efforts for other boats.

"We have to prevent loss of life," he tweeted.

Navy chief Abdul Aziz Jaafar said four vessels had been deployed, and three helicopters and three other ships were on standby.

Myanmar, which earlier hinted it would skip a regional meeting in Thailand next week bringing together representatives of more than a dozen nations, changed course Thursday, saying it would attend. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SYRIA

ISIL takes ancient town of Palmyra

Fears mounted over the fate of one of the Mideast's most prominent archeological sites after ISIL militants overran the historic Syrian town of Palmyra, seizing control Thursday of its temples, tombs and colonnades within hours.

The takeover also expanded the extremists' hold, making them the single group controlling the most territory in Syria.

"The Syrian regime appears to be in terminal decline, and the Islamic State (of Iraq and the Levant), in its timing, is capitalizing on recent losses by government forces in the north and south," said Amr al-Azm, an antiquities expert and professor at Shawnee State University in Ohio.

The militants overran the famed archeological site early Thursday, just hours after seizing the nearby town in central Syria, activists and officials said.

They also captured Palmyra's airport and the notorious Tadmur prison, delivering a startling new defeat for President Bashar al-Assad, whose forces quickly retreated.

Hundreds of Palmyra residents fled the town of 65,000, and many more were trying to escape, said Talal Barazi, the governor of central Homs province.

An oasis set in the Syrian desert, Palmyra is a strategic crossroads linking the capital Damascus and cities to the east and the west. Its capture raised alarm over some of the world's most important ancient ruins, whose fate remained unknown Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

California farmers brace for water cuts

California farmers who hold rights to water that date back as far as the Gold Rush are bracing for their first state-ordered conservation in decades, as a record drought prompts some of the deepest cuts yet in the country's most productive agricultural state.

After telling cities and towns to slash water use by 25 per cent and cutting deliveries to some farmers and others, state officials said Wednesday that they would start mandatory cuts this week to the state's oldest rights holders, who are historically spared from water restrictions. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S., Cuba discuss re-establishing embassies

American and Cuban officials were trying Thursday to complete talks to re-establish embassies in each other's capitals after a half-century interruption. Many differences appeared close to being resolved. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Members of the Yes Equality campaign begin canvassing Thursday in the centre of Dublin, Ireland. People from across the Republic of Ireland will vote Friday in a referendum on the legalization of gay marriage, a vote that pits the power of the Roman Catholic Church against the secular-minded Irish government of Enda Kenny. PETER MORRISON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Premier to Ireland: Vote for gay marriage

REFERENDUM

Opinion polls suggest 'Yes' side will win

Prime Minister Enda Kenny is urging Ireland's voters to support the legalization of gay marriage in a referendum that pits the power of the Catholic Church against his secular-minded government.

Speaking on the eve of Friday's nationwide vote, Kenny said Ireland could "create history" by becoming the first nation to cast a popular vote for gay marriage.

Kenny said voters' approval of a constitutional amendment to legalize gay marriage would represent an Irish civil rights breakthrough "that for generations gay people could never imagine."

"The 'Yes' will obliterate, publicly, the remaining barriers of prejudice or the irrational fear of the 'them' and 'us' in this regard," said Kenny, a devout Catholic who nonetheless during his four years in power has pushed to reduce the church's influence on policy and state services.

Eight opinion polls taken since the campaign opened in March suggest that the "Yes" campaign should win. Kenny's government is holding a referendum because it's considered legally necessary to add an explicit amendment to the country's 1937 constitution before lawmakers can pass the relevant legislation.

> **My voting 'No' is not a vote against gay and lesbian people. It's against changing the definition of marriage.**
> Dublin Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

All political parties and most lawmakers are on the "Yes" side. That lopsided reality, common in Irish referendums, has rebounded in previous contests when some voters, confused by the issue at hand or alienated from the political establishment, voted "No" in protest.

Catholic leaders and conservative pressure groups are arguing that legalization could produce surprising repercussions in Irish courts that could undermine traditional marriages. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LATVIA SUMMIT

EU seeks partnership with ex-Soviet nations

The European Union on Thursday urged six post-communist countries to move closer to the 28-nation bloc as a way to resist Russia's "bullying tactics," and build a brighter future for their citizens.

Speaking at the opening of a two-day summit in Riga, Latvia, European Council President Donald Tusk warned the former Soviet republics they had little to gain from falling back into Moscow's orbit instead of deepening their partnership with the West.

"The Eastern Partnership isn't a beauty contest between Russia and the EU," Tusk said. "But let me be frank, beauty does count. If Russia was a bit softer, more charming, more attractive, perhaps it would not have to compensate its shortcomings by destructive aggressive and bullying tactics against its neighbours."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel backed up Tusk's criticism of Moscow, saying that "the EU makes a crystal-clear difference with Russia. We accept that the different Eastern Partnership nations can go their own way and we accept these different ways."

The EU's partnership program with Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Belarus suffered a major setback a year and a half ago, when Ukraine's then-president Viktor Yanukovych withdrew from signing an association agreement and opted for closer links with Moscow and President Vladimir Putin.

After Yanukovych was ousted, Ukraine's new leadership turned back toward the EU but paid a heavy price: Russia annexed Crimea, large swaths of eastern territory bordering Russia are embroiled in conflict and the nation is in deep economic decline.

Meanwhile, Armenia and Belarus limited their relations with the EU by joining Russia's Eurasian Economic Union and Azerbaijan is showing little excitement about the EU partnership, sending its foreign minister to Riga instead of its president.

Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova are still seeking deeper integration, but many EU countries are reluctant to open the door for membership in the Western club. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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OECD STUDY

Wealth gap hits growth

The widening gap between haves and have-nots in much of the developed world is holding back economic growth, according to a new global study.

Far from a rising tide lifting all ships, income inequality increases in good economic times as well as bad, Thursday's report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development says.

An increase in income inequality between 1985 and 2005 knocked 4.7 percentage points off cumulative growth between 1990 and 2010 on average across its 34 member countries, it concluded in its report, In It Together, Why Less Inequality Benefits All.

Policies to improve women's treatment in the labour market and measures to reverse the growing share of low-quality, "dead-end" jobs are key to reducing income inequality and unlocking more economic growth, the OECD said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Shopify's shares jump 51% a day after stunning debut

E-COMMERCE

Ottawa-based company's IPO priced each share at $17

Shares of Shopify climbed 51 per cent in the company's first day of trading Thursday, one day after raking in $131 million in its initial public offering, more than expected.

Shopify Inc. stock rose $8.68 to close at $25.68. The offering of 7.7 million shares priced at $17 each, valuing the entire company at around $1.27 billion.

The Canadian company works with merchants who want to offer their own online checkout services, providing a platform for small- and mid-size businesses that sell products online. The platform offers merchants the ability to manage inventory, process orders and payments, and also to interact with their customers. Clients can use Shopify's software to handle sales made through mobile phones, the web, physical stores and other means.

Shopify said it handled about $3.8 billion in transactions in 2014, and it reported $105 million in revenue.

The jump put Shopify on pace for one of the strongest first days among companies that went public in 2015. The biggest gainers have been cancer drug developer Aduro Biotech Inc. and Shake Shack Inc., both of which more than doubled on their first day of trading.

The stock is trading on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol SHOP.

InfoTech Research Group senior analyst Ben Dickie says the company is attractive because of its presence in the "hot space" of mobile payments.

He says unlike other tech companies that have listed on the stock market, such as Facebook, Shopify has a clear business model and an obvious potential for revenue growth.

Regulatory filings show that Shopify lost $22.3 million last year compared to $4.8 million in 2013. Its revenue more than doubled to $105 million.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUAL IPO

Shopify offered its shares on both the TSX and the New York Stock Exchange. Its shares opened in New York at $28 US and reached a high of $28.74 US. The stock closed at $31.25 on the TSX after trading as high as $35.03.

Shopify CEO Tobias Lutke, centre wearing hat, rings the New York Stock Exchange opening bell on Thursday, marking the Canadian company's IPO. RICHARD DREW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SHOPIFY

E-Commerce: Shopify targets small- and medium-sized business with software for designing, building and managing sales across the web, mobile applications and stores. Its 165,000 customers in 150 countries include Tesla Motors and the NBA's Los Angeles Lakers. Sixty per cent of its client base is in the U.S.

Value: The company's IPO was priced at $17 US per share, up from the $14 to $16 range the company had previously indicated, because of investor interest.

Humble beginnings: The company grew from the modest ambitions of three Ottawa men looking to sell snowboarding equipment online. The platform they built turned into Shopify, which began offering its services to other businesses in 2006. The original snowboarding shop is still selling boards, bindings and goggles on the web.

Growth: Originally five people, Shopify now has more than 500 employees in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal. The company's new six-floor, 102,000-square-foot headquarters in downtown Ottawa can accommodate 740 employees and Shopify plans to fill the space.

Business model: Around 60 per cent of Shopify's revenue comes from selling subscriptions to its platform. It offers a variety of plans at different price points.

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ONLINE PAYMENTS

PayPal's new chief touts new services

As PayPal prepares to split from its corporate parent, its new chief executive is promising to expand the popular online payment system, adding a variety of services for consumers to use when shopping on their phones or in traditional stores.

PayPal will spin off from parent company eBay later this year at a time when it's facing new competitive challenges. Alibaba, Amazon and even Facebook are promoting online payment systems, while Apple Pay and Google Wallet are competing to handle transactions in stores and on mobile devices.

Veteran executive Dan Schulman, who will be CEO of the new PayPal, says his company will compete by positioning itself as a "full-service" payments partner for consumers and merchants, handling mobile transactions, credit purchases and even customer loyalty rewards programs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mideast youth job market tight

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

Unemployment rate of 29.5% is world's highest

Fawziyeh Sharif and dozens of other young women who make jeans for the U.S. market in a factory in the village of Kitteh in northern Jordan consider themselves lucky — even though they spend 48 hours a week bent over sewing machines for minimum wage.

Sharif, 24, landed her first-ever job when the Ivory Garments Factory opened last year in an area where options had been limited to men joining the army and women staying home.

Yet for millions of young people in the Middle East and North Africa, jobs remain out of reach and the problem has only worsened in the post-Arab Spring turmoil.

Starting Thursday, political and business leaders from 58 countries are coming together for a regional conference of the World Economic Forum and Mideast youth unemployment will be on the agenda.

Jordanian women sew jeans for the U.S. market in a garment factory in the village of Kitteh in northern Jordan. The factory has created employment in an area where options had largely been limited to men joining the army and women staying home. RAAD ADAYLEH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The problem has been debated for years, but has taken on even greater urgency with the growing appeal of militant ideas among desperate young people and the extremist Islamic State group's land grab in Syria and Iraq.

Widespread joblessness creates fertile ground for recruitment by militants, said Samir Murad, a former Jordanian labour minister. There is a risk that if the unemployed "don't find a decent living, they look for the alternatives, and the alternative is the so-called Islamic State," he said.

There are many reasons why the young are unemployed.

A "youth bulge" has created a rising demand for jobs that cannot be met at a time of tepid economic growth blamed on low oil prices and prolonged conflict.

Outdated education systems with emphasis on learning by rote are creating graduates who often lack skills sought by the private sector.

Old social contracts in which autocratic governments serve as the largest employers and buy acquiescence with large-scale subsidies of food and fuel have been breaking down.

Jordan has one of the region's lowest rates of women in the workforce because of constraints imposed by a largely traditional society.

To get around the cultural sensitivities, the garment factory in the northern village of Kitteh employs 82 women, but no local men.

The factory looks like a classroom — except that sewing machines are placed on desks.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PYRAMID

Cultural factors play role in labour mismatches

Jordanians traditionally shun socially stigmatized blue-collar jobs in construction and agriculture, leaving those to be filled by hundreds of thousands of migrant workers and Syrian refugees — despite a national unemployment rate of 13 per cent and youth unemployment of more than 30 per cent.

Only about 30,000 young Jordanians are currently enrolled in vocational schools that produce badly needed plumbers and carpenters, while more than 10 times as many study at universities. Once they graduate, many of the more educated struggle to find jobs, said Samir Murad, a former labour minister.

"It should be the opposite," he said. "The pyramid is totally inverted."

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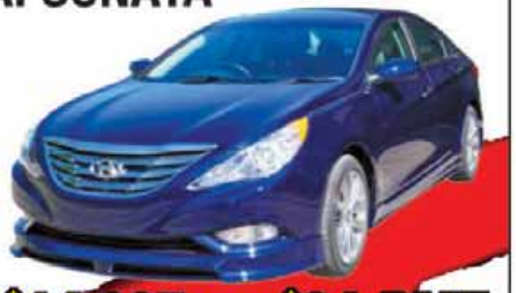

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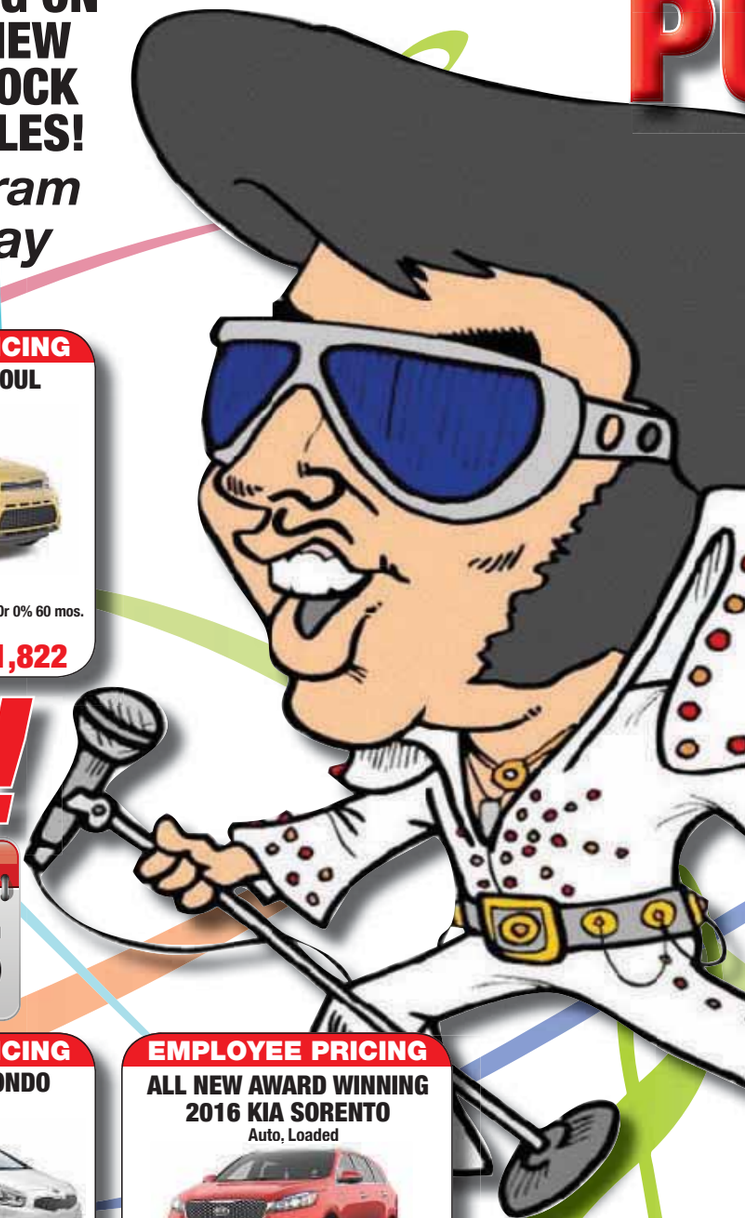

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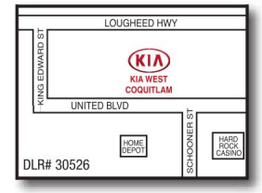

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
WEEKEND, May 22-24, 2015

Happy face/Sad face

From **mangled maps** to **Arctic adventures**, Metro weighs in on the news making headlines this week

Multiple Maritime map mix-ups

A Calgary tour company had to apologize twice this week for bungling maps of two provinces. A brochure from Anderson Vacations advertised three Newfoundland landmarks — Deer Lake, Main Brook, and the capital, St. John's — on a map of Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island. The company said sorry a second time for a map that identified St. John's, N.L. as Saint John, a city in New Brunswick. CBC.CA

Missing man safe after 60km Arctic trek

Parks Canada employee Brian Koonoo, who was reported missing May 15 from Hall Beach, Nunavut, turned up this week after a four-day search through freezing temperatures and blowing snow. Koonoo, an expert hunter, lost his radio. His snowmobile broke down and his GPS ran out of batteries. With help of a map app, on Wednesday at 5:30 a.m., he arrived on foot at his destination, Repulse Bay, after a 60-km stroll. CBC.CA

Pot may be bad news for boys' growth

Smoking marijuana early in life can interfere with boys' development, says a new study from the European Society of Endocrinology. Researchers measured hormones in the blood of 220 non-smoking and 217 marijuana-addicted boys. Puberty hormones were elevated, and growth hormones depressed, in marijuana smokers. The non-smokers were an average four kilograms heavier and 4.6 inches taller by age 20. SCIENCEDAILY.COM

Teen hailed for healthy invention

Forget baking-soda volcanoes: A Vancouver student invented a way to curb global epidemics for his science project — and now he's $75,000 US richer. Raymond Wang, 17, won first prize at the International Science and Engineering Fair in Pittsburgh, Pa. on Friday. He created a new air circulation system to redirect air to give everyone their own breathing space in aircraft cabins. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Thanks, Air Canada, for the laugh at others' pain

THE KOHLER REPORT
Rebecca Kohler

Do you ever find yourself deriving pleasure in other people's misfortunes? Like when you run into an ex-boyfriend who, for every hair he's lost, has gained a pound? There's a term for this perverse glee. It's called schadenfreude (from the German words schaden, for "damage" and freude, meaning "joy"). Well, I had some major damage-joy this week when I heard Air Canada was going to start cracking down on carry-on luggage. That's right, as of next week, Air Canada will be carefully inspecting your carry-on. If it's too big, they'll charge you $25 to check it.

Now, you might be thinking, "Rebecca, you idiot, you're also going to suffer — you are deriving pleasure from your own misfortune." But here's the thing, I won't. I won't suffer from this new rule because I was never one of those people who tried to bring my refrigerator onto the plane. My bags were always the appropriate size because I'm what they call a "rule-follower" (a.k.a. a brown-noser).

I tried a few times to bring my overnight clothes on board but almost every time I'd get singled out and be forced to check my bag at the gate. It's like when I travel, I turn into Mr. Bean and nothing goes my way. Flight attendants would stop me and tell me my bag was too big. Meanwhile, I'd see another person get on board with a cello and a pet elephant.

One time, as I boarded, I was told there was no overhead space left — a situation familiar to those who are often last to board (not-rich people). I checked my tiny suitcase, but when I got to my seat, I was shocked to find the overhead bin empty — while this is the kind of irony that made Alanis Morissette famous, all it caused for me was severe irritation.

Since giving up on trying to bring an extra set of undies on board, I have gritted my teeth while watching others get away with carry-on murder: "laptop" bags that could fit a desktop computer from 1988, or those people who affix two small suitcases together so it looks like one (you know who you are).

And because of those people, often — by the time I get on board with my modest but cool Herschel backpack — I can't even store it overhead and am forced to cram it down by my feet, giving me even less leg room than the centimetre I was allotted.

I won't suffer under this new rule, because I was never one of those people who tried to bring my refrigerator onto the plane.

So, yeah, I can't wait for the next time I fly, when I will get to watch everyone else go through what, for some reason, I've been going through my entire life. See you at the baggage carousel, suckers!

Rebecca Kohler is a standup comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter @becca_kohler

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

The government love sleuth's guide to spotting true passion

We're lucky we've got the government to judge and sanction modern love.

Just look at a Citizenship and Immigration Canada training document from 2007 — revealed this week — which offers tips on how to spot "non-genuine marital relationships."

The extra tool to counter "an observed temporary spike in cases of marriages of convenience," as a spokesperson put it, undoubtedly helped immigration officers in Ottawa cubicles identity the real deal, before conditions changed a few years ago.

And since what is love internationally is love domestically, it's helpful for us all.

For example, Chinese nationals marrying non-Chinese are suspicious. Restaurant receptions are dubious. No honeymoon, "not even a couple of days away"? Likely, no love. Oh, and diamonds, in ring form, are obligatory.

An age difference of more than 10 years (like that of my long-married parents) is a red flag. A lack of photos equals a lack of romance. And different ethnic and education backgrounds show lovers are pulling a scam. After all, in modern times, like marries like.

The document also clarifies that money DOES buy love, and is in fact key to its veracity. Sparing no cost on a wedding isn't cliché – it's credible.

Of course, this all makes it hard for poor people to avoid a sham marriage. And sadly, it means a few of my friends have love that's a lie.

Like the Canadians who eloped in Austin, Texas, using rings they already owned. And the ones who wed at a cottage without parents or professional photos.

I have bad news, too, for my friend who married a man from India, possibly one of those "very poor" countries that are a source of frauds looking for a better life. After all, the "more they have to gain, the higher the bar is to satisfy the bona fides."

Thank God I'm with an American; someone who "doesn't gain that much." I'm even grateful this document was released (via an access to information request). It will help us plan the right romantic evidence for the government love sleuth.

For instance, we won't use photos of us in pyjamas or cooking — like my colleague did on her application. They're an obvious attempt to prove fake cohabitation. She had to cough up better proof.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada, let it be said, has a very tough job measuring love. And if our non-traditional, on-the-cheap, interracial and sans-family weddings just don't match the state's ideals, we know who's wrong.

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metro LIFE

Your essential daily news

Tempted by Tomorrowland?

OPENING WEEKEND

Disney remains mum on plot details of their $190M film

IN FOCUS

Richard Crouse

We're about to reach the tipping point of the summer and it's not even the end of May.

In a summer crowded with sequels like Avengers: Age of Ultron and Pitch Perfect 2; reboots like Terminator Genisys and Jurassic World; remakes like Poltergeist and Entourage — a TV show blown up for the big screen — along comes Tomorrowland, a big-budget film based on an original idea.

Not every film this year is a sequel, prequel or the like, but Tomorrowland, with a budget topping out at $190 million, is the most expensive original film to come down the pike this year.

Borrowing its name from the futuristic themed land found at Disney parks, the movie stars George Clooney as a former boy genius, and Britt Robertson as a gifted teenager, who — according to the press materials — "travel to a place somewhere in time and space only known as Tomorrowland where their actions directly affect the world and themselves."

Disney is deliberately keeping plot details under wraps, hoping the allure of mysterious trailers will draw people in. It's the opposite of the usual strategy of showcasing the film's highlights in a two-minute promo.

I was at the D23 Expo in Anaheim, Calif. — imagine the Disney version of Comic Con — in 2013 when Brad Bird and Damon Lindelof unveiled the name of the movie, but little else.

In a splashy presentation they claimed a "dusty old box" labelled 1952, that was found in the Disney Imagineering archives, had inspired the story.

Containing a mysterious mishmash of items, including a 1928 copy of Amazing Stories magazine, a photograph of Walt Disney and Amelia Earhart allegedly taken after her disappearance, a short animated documentary and an unidentified metal object, they said the idea of the film is to ask "what if these mystery clues were real?"

Teasing the potential audience into buying tickets is an intriguing but risky idea. It's a risk Bird was willing to take. He turned down the chance to direct Star Wars: Episode VII — The Force Awakens, to make Tomorrowland, saying, "it's rare to do a film of this size that's original, so those opportunities can't be missed either."

But will it be an opportunity that moviegoers will embrace? Suggesting that Hollywood only feels comfortable with movies that are pre-sold via brand recognition is an understatement. Whether it is a familiar title with a number added or any movie from the mighty Marvel stable, the big studios aren't in the habit of taking chances and it's not their fault. It's ours.

Britt Robertson stars in Tomorrowland, the most expensive original film to come out this summer. CONTRIBUTED

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Tomorrowland ★★★
Welcome To Me ★★★★
Banksy Does New York ★★★

HOW RATING WORKS	
★★★★	SEE IT
★★★	WORTHWHILE
★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT

One of the main complaints I hear from people is that there are no interesting movies in release and yet Furious 7 and Age of Ultron have grossed amounts equal to the GNP of some small nations.

By supporting big-budget "branded" movies, we send the message that original stories don't interest us, only ones that give us what we expect.

While we have the chance, why not take a chance on a movie that takes a risk?

That's the tipping point. Check out Tomorrowland or Ex Machina.

If sci-fi isn't your thing, how about Aloha or Inside Out? There is room for all kinds of movies but why not vote with your feet and let the studios know that their steady diet of sequels, prequels and reboots is quickly nearing its best-by date.

George Clooney stars in a new Disney film about trying to go back to the 1960s to make the world a better place. DISNEY 2015

INTERVIEW

George Clooney: The eternal optimist

Ned Ehrbar
Metro | Life

George Clooney may be one of the few bona fide movie stars we have left, but he still thinks he's a bit out of place in the summer blockbuster arena.

"Putting me in a summer movie is a very bold thought," he says with his trademark smirk.

"First and foremost, I think it's a really bold thing for Disney to be willing to do a film that isn't a sequel and isn't a comic book and truly invest in a summer film of this sort of ilk."

Which sort of ilk, exactly? Tomorrowland, directed by Brad Bird and written by Bird and Lost creator Damon Lindelof, features Clooney as "a former boy genius who's gotten bitter in his old age" — to hear Clooney himself describe it — who teams up with a precocious teen (Britt Robertson) to get back to the secret world of Tomorrowland, where the smartest minds disappeared back in the 1960s to build a better future.

"I opened up the description of the character — 'A 55-year-old has-been.' I'm kind of going, 'Wait, hey, hey, hey, hang on a minute. Which part am I reading for?'"

Luckily, 54-year-old Clooney got over any lingering sense of vanity.

"I just loved the idea," he says.

"We live in a world right now where you turn on your television set and it's rough out there and it's not fun, and it can really wear on you after a period of time.

"We see generations now feeling as if it's sort of hopeless in a way.

"What I love about it is it speaks to the idea that your future is not preordained and predestined, and that if you're involved, a single voice can make a difference — and I believe in that."

That 1960s optimism is something Clooney would like to see more of here in the 21st century.

COMEDY SEQUEL

Pitch Perfect 2 star Brittany Snow finds humour in having a nervous breakdown

The girls from Pitch Perfect are back, and if you think that Brittany Snow's character, Chloe, should have graduated by now, you're not wrong. For Snow, that meant playing a character pretending to be dumb enough not to graduate — all for the sake of a cappella.

Brittany Snow reprises her role in Pitch Perfect 2. CONTRIBUTED

Exactly how many years has your character been in college now?
Um ... she was a sophomore in the first one, so she's failed, I think, now three times? Yeah. She just loves being a Bella and just can't give it up. They wanted her to still be involved and unable to let go, and because she's had to stay in school to be a Bella she has to get more and more dumb.

How do you approach playing a character who is intentionally trying to seem dumb?
The way to play that is to make her not dumb. She believes wholeheartedly everything that she's saying, and she really passionately cares about these girls and this legacy. You see that in the first one and you definitely see that in this one, that she cares so much about this. It's her entire life. She only sees what's in front of her and she doesn't see that eventually you have to move on.

Speaking of, where do you see her going after she finally leaves college?
Because she's an extremist and she only does things to 100 per cent, she probably would take it in the exact opposite way and really let go of everything. I just have this image of her being a hippie, just living in a commune or, like, in a field, going to Burning Man.

But she would be, like, really into Burning Man, right?
She's really into Burning Man. She's doing all of the activities and everything. She's probably manning all the booths (laughs).

How did you find the right balance for the humour in this?
When we got the script it was very edgy, and I was extremely excited because it really didn't shy away from all things funny, no matter what or who it offended. A lot of that has been cut because we couldn't make that movie with a PG-13 rating.

What sort of offensive stuff are we talking about?
My character was drunk a lot of the time and jumping in the pool and going a little bit crazy, and that got cut as well. Chloe's definitely still having a nervous breakdown, but she's not drunk — which is unfortunate, because I really liked playing that.

NED EHRBAR/METRO HOLLYWOOD

On the darker side of funny

SOPHOMORE DIRECTOR

Shira Piven takes a risk in comedy about mental illness

Steve Gow
For Metro

When Shira Piven went searching for a story to make her second movie, she came across a script that might have scared off a lot of other filmmakers. After all, Welcome To Me isn't just a comedy — it's a comedy about mental illness.

"I feel like the script was written with care," explained the sophomore director from Los Angeles. "It's definitely risky to make a movie that has funny elements about a woman who has borderline personality disorder, which is a very real thing, but there are lots of funny things that happen in real life; lots of absurb moments that we all stumble into — even people with mental illness — so the tone of the script was very familiar to me."

Even so, Piven insists she was "extremely careful and respectful" in crafting the fictional comedy about unstable Alice Klieg (Kristen Wiig) — a woman who wins the lottery and, inspired by her idol Oprah Winfrey, buys herself a talk show in which to broadcast her own incredibly personal interests and issues.

"I think the mental illness illuminates the social illness in the movie," said Piven, referring to the parallels of Klieg's obsession with today's cultural infatuation to "broadcast" our lives through social media.

Piven also admits that casting Kristen Wiig was key to balancing that fine line between drawing laughs and simply treading on a sensitive social issue. Although Wiig is best known for crafting side-splitting characters from her days on Saturday Night Live, the Bridesmaids star portrays Alice Klieg with subdued poignancy.

"I was inspired by certain performances that I'd seen," says Piven, who specifically points to Martin Scorsese's 1982 film The King of Comedy in which comedians Jerry Lewis and Sandra Bernhard played serious parts. "They played it absolutely straight so they were fascinating. I find the darker side of funny people really fascinating (so) I felt that I wanted an actress like Kristen — an actress that really began in a comic place intuitively but could also go to more tragic, darker places."

> **"I find the darker side of funny people really fascinating"**
> Director Shira Piven

Kristen Wiig in the dark comedy Welcome to Me. CONTRIBUTED

ON THE SET

Wind Kristen Wiig up, and let her go
"That's your job as a director when you're working with good people," said Shira Piven of working with Kristen Wiig.

"Create an environment where they feel free to play and be their most free self. So a lot of time it was just about keeping a very relaxed atmosphere on set and making sure she felt safe and comfortable trying a lot of different things."

Improvising and flexing her comedy muscle
Co-produced by her longtime husband and filmmaker Adam McKay, Piven admits the Anchorman-director helped her flex her comedy muscle.

"He's got this kind of amazing method of directing comedy and when he produces, he always encourages directors to use improvisation and get alternate takes," said Piven.

"Its not entirely a comedy but definitely, (he) gave me more confidence to do more improvising."

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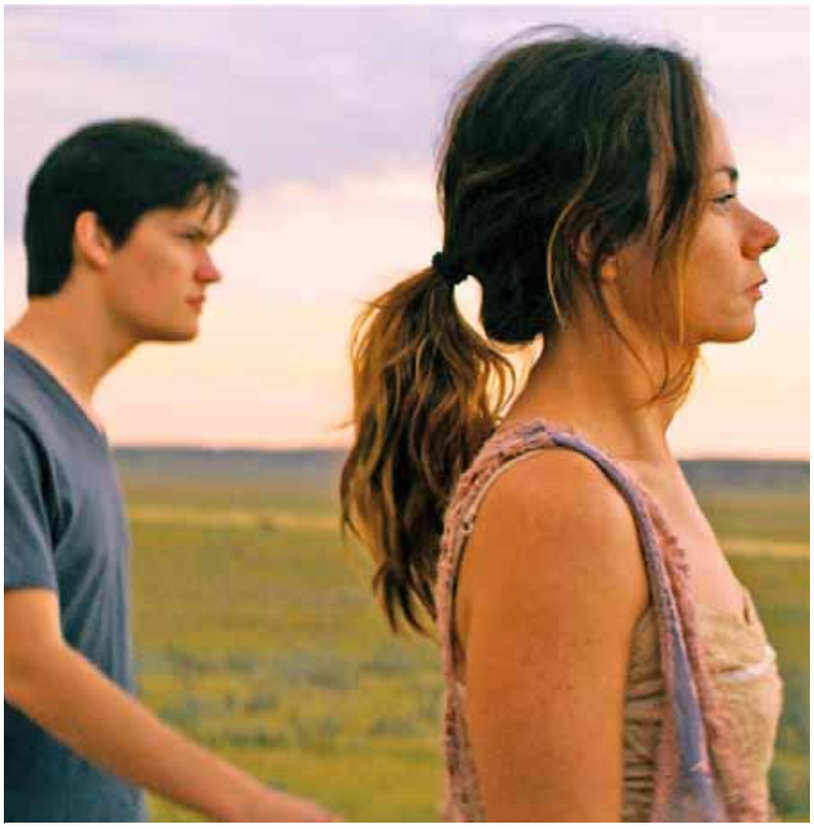

In Big Muddy, Nadia Litz plays Martha, a single mom caught in a web of crime and desperation.
CONTRIBUTED

Litz gets gritty in thriller Big Muddy

NEW FILM

Actress embraces her messy female character

Chris Alexander
Metro | Life

Actress Nadia Litz is a force of nature. The petite-in-stature-but-towering-in-presence Canadian performer is not only a noted thespian, she's a producer, director and an intellectual who is currently hard at work editing her feature directorial debut. In the meantime, however, Litz stars in new Canadian thriller Big Muddy, a gritty film that casts her as Martha, a troubled single mother caught in a web of crime and desperation and a woman who defies the traditional template of female protagonist.

"I think Martha is an anti-hero," Litz says. "(Director) Jefferson (Moneo) was playing with western tropes, playing the idea of a character that is really a mess; a female who is making choices that conflict with her family life. Some will find her villainous, selfish and a terrible mom but some will find her heroic and just trying to find her independence."

Big Muddy (named after the Saskatchewan prairie town that Martha and her son seek refuge in) is an atmospheric and brooding film with an orchestral score that would feel at home in a Brian De Palma picture. But although the movie plays with traditional American genre tropes, there is still something uniquely Canadian about it; a kind of Canuck Gothic, if you will.

"This is a neo-noir," Litz says, "and that's my favourite genre. Jefferson knew from reading my Facebook page what movies I was interested in; we had the same vernacular. There's a lot of Bonnie and Clyde in here; a lot of The Searchers. But there's a rich history of outlaws in the badlands of Saskatchewan, and that kind of mythmaking is something Canadian movies rarely explore."

> **"This is a neo-noir and that's my favourite genre.**
> Nadia Litz

Litz's aforementioned directorial debut is called The People Garden, another riff on the traditional noir, about a woman named Sweetpea (played by Dree Hemingway, Ernest's granddaughter) who goes to Japan to potentially break up with her boyfriend only to find he's gone missing. A serpentine detective story ensues, with Sweetpea's emotional conflict about her lover matched by her obsession to find him.

"I want to create roles for women that are as exciting as the kind of roles, say, Jack Nicholson would have gotten. Strong, complicated characters who make difficult decisions. And I will do this, whether it's me playing them or creating them."

Now playing

WESTERN/DRAMA/HORROR

Big Muddy

Director: Jeff Moneo
Starring: Nadia Litz

An outlaw tale played out as a modern-day murder ballad.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
No reviews yet	0%

DRAMA/COMEDY

Welcome to Me

Director: Shira Piven
Starring: Kristen Wiig

A troubled woman wins the lottery and gets a talk show.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
71%	56%

DRAMA

Saint Laurent

Director: Bertrand Bonello
Starring: Gaspard Ulliel

A look at one of history's greatest fashion designers.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics:	Audience:
53%	+62%

So long, TV greats, hello, old friend

Jessica Allen commemorated the end of Mad Men and Letterman with a couple of slices from her favourite pizza joint. ABOVE AND BELOW: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS; VESUVIO PIZZA SHOT: TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FINALE

Enjoy a few slices, for old times' sake

THE TV DINNER
Jessica Allen

My partner Simon and I used to order a party-size pizza from Vesuvio in Toronto at least once a week. But because I've been mindful of what I eat since January, it's been a while. Okay, precisely 147 days.

How would I cope without it? It felt like the end of an era: a sentiment millions of viewers share after two great television shows, Mad Men and Late Night with David Letterman, have ended.

Mad Men adorers methodically look for meaning. In the third-last episode, for example, I noted that two characters said "for old times' sake." That's a line from The Godfather—remember when Tessio asks Tom to let him off the hook? Coincidentally, in that very episode Don Draper is reading The Godfather. Jackpot!

Other views, including Simon's, argue that while there are great moments — including the first season's Kodak Carousel scene when Draper's advertising magic seduces the client and the audience — they all come undone on account of one of the stupidest backstories in all of television.

It's ham-fisted, says Simon, and undermines any existential weight the show accidentally has.

Opinions aside, we ordered a Vesuvio party-size Vulcano pizza — green olives on half — to watch the series finale on Sunday night, for old times' sake.

Sweet Lord, did that pie bring back memories.

Like watching Letterman after school in the late '80s and early '90s, which we'd tape on VHS (that's a primitive form of PVR) while scoffing down Pizza Pops.

I get all nostalgic about the talk show host, who's been commanding late-night stages for 33 years. I remember watching comedian Chris Elliott's bits; I remember Drew Barrymore flashing him; I remember his first episode after 9/11.

But I can't recall the last time a Letterman clip went viral. The New York Times recently asked Letterman if he regrets not tweaking his show in order to accommodate new audiences: "I know I can't do what Jimmy Fallon's doing. I know I can't do what Jimmy Kimmel is doing," he said. "There's nothing left to be worried about."

Speak for yourself. The rest of us will have to cope with Fallon cracking himself up after every joke and smashing eggs on his head.

I also fretted over marking the finale of Mad Men before the pizza arrived and told Simon as much.

"Are you kidding me?" he said, before declaring that it's the only show where the series doesn't live up to the finale. "Are you not even listening to the song I just put on? And look what I'm drinking!"

He was holding a vodka martini with a twist. In the background, Frank Sinatra's I Get Along Without You Very Well hummed away.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social

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One World wonder

From the top of One World Trade Center, videos and multimedia displays reflect the hope and optimism of a tower and a city that rose from the ruins of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS EXCEPT FOR ONE WORLD TRADE CENTRE, BY ISTOCK

AT THE TOP

Panoramic city views

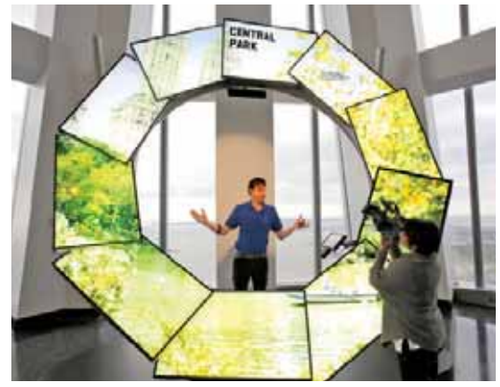
At the observatory, which opens May 29, visitors can stand on a round video platform that shows an actual livestream of the view straight down. There's also wraparound views stretching 80 kilometres past the Manhattan skyline to the Atlantic Ocean. On the elevator ride down, LED screens surrounding passengers simulate the flight of a bird or plane high above the site, dipping and soaring around the skyscrapers all the way back to the ground.

$32 **Price of an adult ticket to One World Observatory. Tickets for seniors cost $30 and $26 for children.**
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WHAT'S IN THE OBSERVATORY

Panels inform visitors

Stepping from the elevator to the One World Observatory, visitors are greeted with display panels showing 3D, bird's-eye scenes of the metropolis. The panels then lift to reveal New York City — right now. There's another display called City Pulse, a ring of high-definition video monitors marking popular city activities, neighbourhoods and "hot spots." A wave of the hand in the direction of any of these subjects opens further details.



"This is a reminder of moving forward.
David Checketts, CEO of Legends, operator of One World Observatory

WHEN YOU ENTER

Workers tell their stories

Just above the street-level entrance, faces of men and women who toiled to erect the gleaming, 1,776-foot, 104-storey tower appear in a jagged tunnel that replicates the building's bedrock, their recorded voices filled with both pain and pride. And during the 48-second elevator ride up to the 102nd floor, a 3D, time-lapse panorama shows 515 years of history at the tip of Manhattan, with the twin towers of the original World Trade Center appearing for less than four seconds before dissolving out of view.

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3 GREAT GRAPE-GROWING REGIONS OF THE WORLD

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie

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ISTOCK

1 Marlborough, New Zealand

Driving around the towns of Blenheim and Renwick, lovers of Sauvignon Blanc will recognize familiar names such as Cloudy Bay and Villa Maria from the shelves of their liquor stores back home. However, make sure to check out some of unknowns; the Twelve Trees restaurant at the Allan Scott wineries served up an incredible lunch of the area's locally farmed greenshell mussels and the colonial-style Bistro at Hans Herzog is renowned throughout the country. Stay at the charming St Leonards Vineyard Cottages in Blenheim; the Woolshed cottage overlooks the vineyard and an orchard of lemon trees full of goats.

2 Alsace, France

The region of Alsace sits nestled against the Vosges Mountains on the French side of the border between Germany and France. The region produces eight varietals but is best known for its Riesling, which is less sweet than you might expect. The region is relatively small and is best explored by bike. Some of the larger towns of Colmar or Molsheim make good places to base yourself, but make sure to take time to explore the stunning and charming villages in between. Riquewihr is a picture-perfect postcard example of the region's unique architecture, which is influenced by its close proximity to Germany.

PETER REMUS

ISTOCK

3 Okanagan Valley, B.C.

Here in Canada, British Columbia's Okanagan Valley is a great choice, particularly if you are fan of red wine. Headquarter yourself in Kelowna, recognized as the birthplace of the province's wine industry and home to some of the oldest and most established wineries. With a critical mass of more than 25 wineries to visit, there are five established wine trails in the area; Scenic Sip, Fab Five of Kelowna, Grapes & Grains Trail, Lakeshore Wine Route, and Westside Wine Trail. The iconic Mission Hill Family Estate sits on a hill overlooking Lake Okanagan and is a true destination winery. It offers some amazing culinary experiences tying in with the local farm-to-table culture and some signature events, including a fall epicurean dinner and a summer concert series.

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Cocktail culture shakes up city

OTTAWA

Bartenders creating new combinations to sip, savour

Whether celebrating happy hour, going on a date or indulging in a liquid lunch, Ottawa's cocktail scene has plenty on tap.

Gone are the days when the drink with the most alcohol and sugar was the tipple of the week (we're looking at you, Long Island Iced Tea). Now cocktails are appreciated not only for their intoxicating abilities, but also for their flavour profiles.

"Bartenders everywhere have moved towards more traditional, organic cocktail making," said Emily Ienzi, owner of the farm-to-table gastropub Two Six Ate in Ottawa's Little Italy neighbourhood. "People are making their own bitters, infusing spirits, making syrups and cordials and using fresh, local ingredients."

With twists on traditional beverages and unique creations, Two Six Ate's list is expansive, and gives a nod to the surrounding Italian community with Campari, Aperol and Prosecco.

Emily Ienzi, left, owner, and Roopa Philar, manager, of Ottawa restaurant Two Six Ate, create cocktails. JUSTIN TANG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Gin 'n Juice cocktail — gin, grapefruit juice, soda, house grapefruit bitters, peach bitters, lemon juice, allspice, maple syrup and, most notably, a splash of Cynar — had been invented to feature the herb-and-citrus Italian artichoke liqueur.

"I had wanted to (pair Cynar and grapefruit) for a long time," Ienzi said. "I've always thought those flavours could work well together if they were balanced the right way. I think the drink is fun and refreshing and a good example of the types of things we like to make."

Among all the factors that make a great cocktail, "balance" is one word common among bartenders and mixologists, even those new to the scene like Ace Mercado.

Opened in August, the restaurant prides specializes in tequila-based drinks. It's not all margaritas and tequila sunrises though. Ace is highly creative; any patron need only order the Aldasoro to see that.

A mix of tequila and liqueurs, the cocktail is a beautiful purple, but it doesn't stop there. For wow, Ace uses green Chartreuse that is lit and then cooled using liquid nitrogen.

"(We want to) leave each guest with a strikingly unique and memorable experience through each of our different cocktails," said Scott Porter, managing partner of Ace Mercado.

On Elgin Street, the Guest Room, on the top floor of Fresco Bistro, has a speakeasy vibe and is constantly mixing up something new and different.

The bar creates its own flavours of alcohol, from tulip and rosemary-infused gin to tobacco-infused tequila. Staffers make their own syrups, like salted caramel, vanilla and even Guinness. Many drinks are smoked.

The mixologists need a certain amount of swagger to serve the Rat Pack, a $40 cocktail featuring Jack Daniel's Frank Sinatra Select whiskey and buttered Johnnie Walker Black Label whisky.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IF YOU GO

Where to have a drink

- Two Six Ate is at 268 Preston St. and is open late. Closed on Tuesdays.
- Ace Mercado is at 121 Clarence St. in the ByWard Market.
- The Guest Room is on the second floor of Fresco Bistro at 354 Elgin St.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TRAVEL NOTES CARIBBEAN CAMP AND BRAZILIAN LUXURY

Kids camp

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Bucket List: Kenoa Resort

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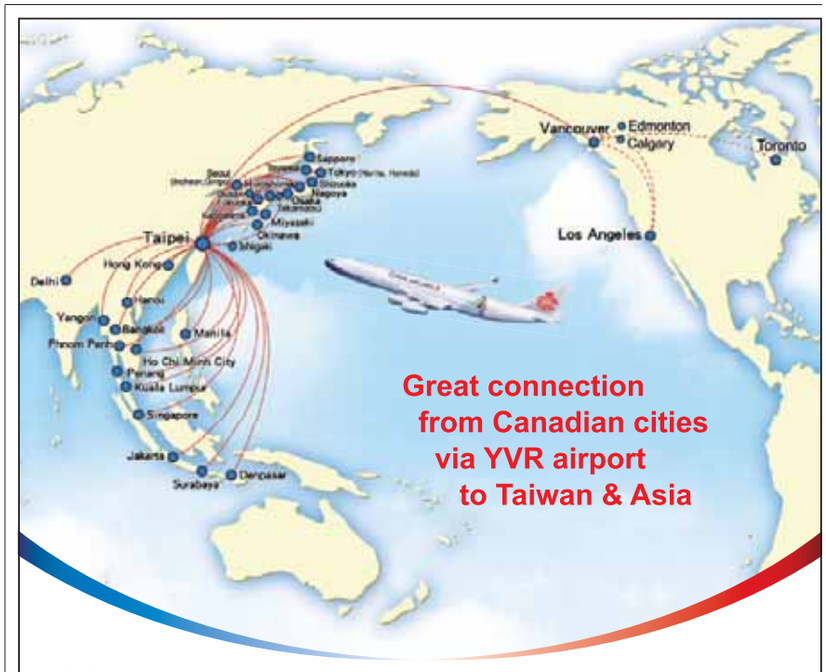
The Kenoa Resort in Brazil. CONTRIBUTED

Royalton Resorts caters to kids. CONTRIBUTED

The SANTO Seat, for safety. CONTRIBUTED



Daily service during summer schedule

ROUTING	FLT No.	DEPT	ARRL	FLT No.	DEPT	ARRL
YYC-YVR-TPE	CI9315	23:15	23:41	CI 031	02:00	06:05
YEG-YVR-TPE	CI9317	21:15	21:48	CI 031	02:00	06:05
YYZ-YVR-TPE	CI9313	22:00	00:02	CI 031	02:00	06:05
YVR-LAX-TPE	CI9321	16:25	19:13	CI 007	01:05	06:00
YYC-LAX-TPE	CI9318	19:20	21:28	CI 007	01:05	06:00

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metro SPORTS
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Milos Raonic, who is recovering from foot surgery, withdrew from the French Open

NHL PLAYOFFS

Ducks back in driver's seat

Frederik Andersen made 27 saves, helping Anaheim kill off five power plays, and the Ducks beat the Chicago Blackhawks 2-1 on Thursday night for a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference final.

Defenceman Simon Despres scored his first career playoff goal in the second period as top-seeded Anaheim bounced back quite nicely from a triple-overtime loss at home in Game 2. Patrick Maroon had a power-play goal and Ryan Getzlaf added two assists.

GAME 3 In Chicago

DUCKS	HAWKS
2	1

Patrick Kane scored his eighth playoff goal for Chicago, and Corey Crawford made 25 saves.

Game 4 is Saturday night in Chicago.

The teams were tied 1-1 before Despres drove a pass from Getzlaf past Crawford from the right wing with 55 seconds left in the second. Despres came over in a trade with Pittsburgh in March. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Canada's soccer hopes touch down at Pearson

The Canadian women's soccer team touched down in Toronto on Thursday night, their next-to-last stop before kicking off the World Cup in little more than two weeks.

Coach John Herdman and the 23-player Canada roster arrived at Pearson International Airport from Mexico, where they spent the last week undergoing heat training in Cancun.

The host squad will open the tournament against China in Edmonton June 6.

The World Cup's other host cities include Vancouver, Montreal, Winnipeg, Moncton and Ottawa. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Laba could be complete package, says Robinson

WHITECAPS

Midfielder chips in with unlikely goal at crucial time

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

Matias Laba was the unlikely hero for the Vancouver Whitecaps on Wednesday.

In the second leg of the Amway Canadian Championship semifinal between the Whitecaps and FC Edmonton, Laba managed to control a bouncing ball in the box, spin and fire a shot through the legs of goalkeeper Matt VanOekel in the 97th minute to give Vancouver a 2-1 win, and a 3-2 score on aggregate, to advance to the final against Montreal in August.

Laba, the 23-year-old designated player and midfielder from Argentina, is known more for his defensive style. He has never scored a goal in regular-season play for the Whitecaps since joining the club prior to the start of the 2014 season.

He's aggressive on the ball and physical in his challenges, even if that means the odd caution from an official.

His goal against Edmonton suddenly changed the Whitecaps' fortunes in their quest to win their first-ever Canadian championship.

Matias Laba is known more for his focus on defence. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Just five minutes before that, the Whitecaps conceded a goal on a penalty kick.

That Edmonton equalizer, in the second minute of second half stoppage time, made the score 2-2 on aggregate, with both teams having scored an away goal.

Extra time loomed.

"I'm happy because the goal was important for the team," said Laba.

Head coach Carl Robinson has on numerous occasions lauded Laba's strong defensive play.

Robinson admitted Thursday that if Laba could chip in with the odd goal, it would make him that much more of an impact player.

"When you see him in training, he scores goals," said Robinson.

"He's got great technique. He's fantastic at what we he does. For me, he's the best defensive midfield player in the league, bar none.

"He's still got a way to go and things to learn. But if he could add a couple of goals — a string to his bow in a couple of goals — then he could be the complete package. But he's brilliant at what he does, so if he can chip in with one or two more a season, I'll be happy."

The Whitecaps are now on the road to face the Colorado Rapids on Saturday.

TICKED OFF

Head coach irked after win

Asked about possible relief, Carl Robinson might be feeling after Wednesday's thrilling victory, the coach had an interesting answer.

"It was certain things that went on during the game, which I wasn't happy about, that I don't condone and I don't accept," said Robinson.

"We won the game. I'm delighted for the group. You see the elation on the boys. It's an important game for us and the club but there's some things that I don't think are right in the game."

Robinson didn't want to get into specifics.

"Just things that shouldn't be said," is how he described them.

"Listen, I'm not here to tell tales or nothing like that. I'm here to win games of football and that's what we did."

HOCKEY

Fighting words: Babcock dubs Leafs 'Canada's team'

Canadians can get touchy when one NHL franchise is anointed as "Canada's team," as incoming Toronto Maple Leafs head coach Mike Babcock found out on Thursday.

"Whether you believe it or not, I believe this is Canada's team and we need to put Canada's team back on the map," Babcock told a buzzing media contingent at Air Canada Centre on Thursday while accepting the job as the 30th head coach in Maple Leafs history.

It was one seemingly innocuous comment at the beginning of a lengthy news conference, but it certainly touched a nerve.

Mike Babcock TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Maple Leafs added to the outrage when they posted a Vine video of Babcock uttering the offending phrase on their Twitter account.

Social media justice was swift. "Canada's Team" was the second-highest trending topic in the country on Twitter, with several posters mocking the suggestion that the Maple Leafs represented hockey fans nationwide.

"'Canada's Team' Jesus. This is why Canada hates Toronto," read one Twitter post.

Some felt the Montreal Canadiens, with their proud history, are Canada's team.

"Canada deserves better than a perennial loser and disappointment. Everybody knows who Canada's team is. #Habs," posted Calgary Stampeders punter Rob Maver.

Others believed the term "Canada's team" should be reserved for international tournaments.

"If you mention 'Canada's team' and you're not referring to an international tournament I want to fire you directly into the sun," was the pointed response from one Twitter user.

Of course, few are more qualified on speaking on Canada's international experience than Babcock. He has coached Canada to two Olympic gold medals, a world championship title and a world junior championship crown. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MAPLE LAUGHS

The Leafs have missed the playoffs in nine of the last 10 seasons and seemingly quit trying last season while slumping to a 30-44-8 record, second-worst in the Eastern Conference.

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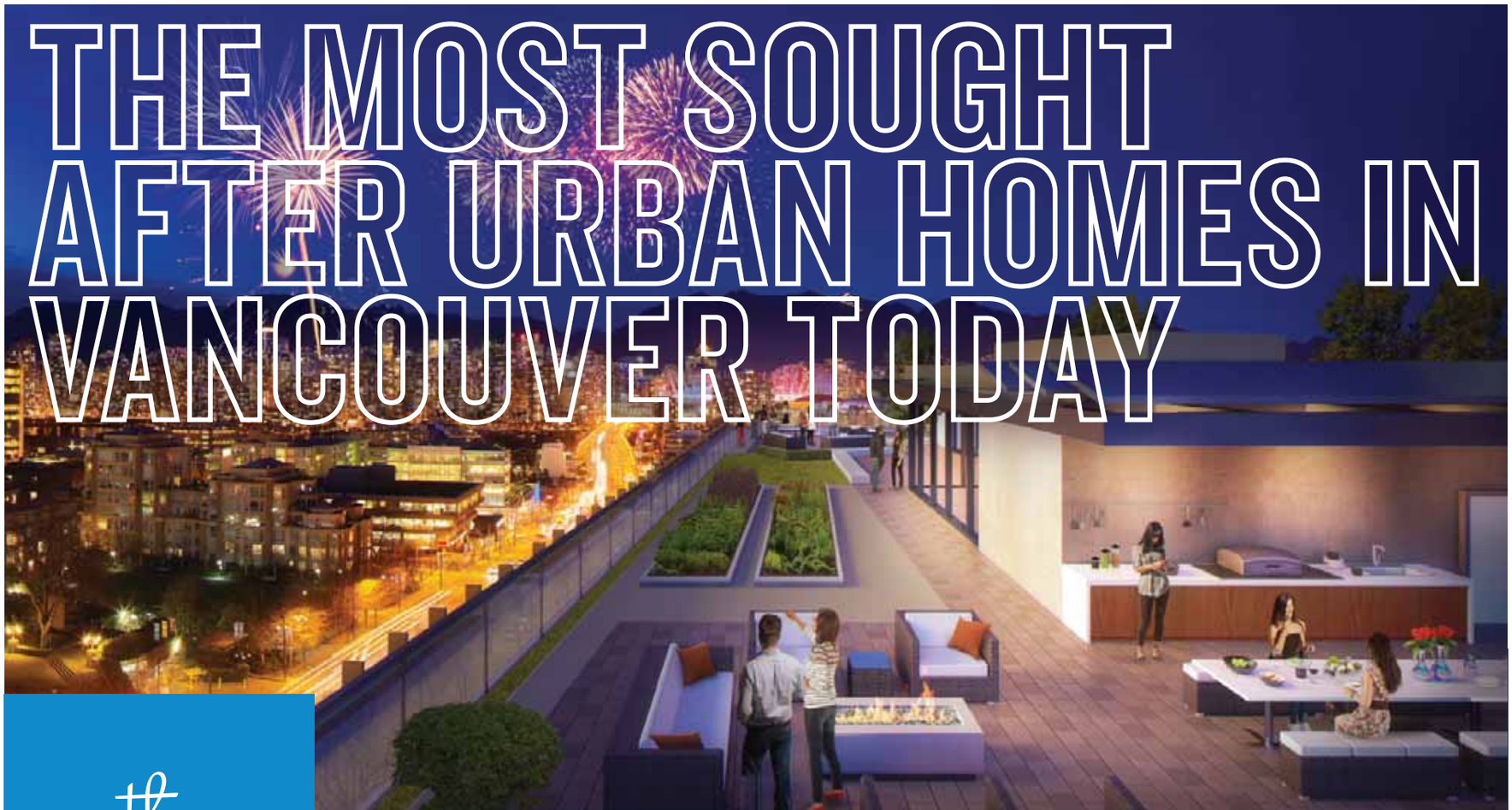

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FIVE TOP PLAYERS TO WATCH

At the Memorial Cup

MAY 21-31

A look at who could shine in Quebec City

LEON DRAISAITL

Kelowna Rockets
The six-foot-one, 210-pound centre led the Rockets in playoff scoring with 10 goals and 28 points in 19 games. Drafted third overall by Edmonton in 2014, the German started the season with the Oilers, then was returned to the Western Hockey League in January.

ADAM ERNE

Quebec Remparts
Tampa Bay, already loaded with scoring talent, have another blue-chipper on the way with the six-foot-one 218-pound left-winger. The Connecticut native was second in QMJHL playoff scoring with 21 goals and nine assists in 22 games. Picked 33rd by the Bolts in 2013.

JAN KOSTALEK

Rimouski Oceanic
The six-foot-one, 195 pound defenceman was a force as the Oceanic topped the Remparts in the QMJHL final. The 20-year-old Czech had eight goals and 21 points in 20 post-season games. Drafted 114th overall by the Winnipeg Jets in 2013.

MICHAEL DAL COLLE

Oshawa Generals
Led the generals with 93 points in the regular season and tied with teammate Cole Cassels for second in OHL playoff scoring (behind Erie's Connor McDavid) with 31 points in 21 games. Picked fifth overall by the New York Islanders in 2014.

NICK MERKLEY

Kelowna Rockets
The 17-year-old's stock for the 2015 draft keeps rising. A five-foot-10 centre, Merkley is a playmaker with a tenacious, energetic game. The Calgary native was third in WHL playoff scoring with five goals and 27 points.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

NBA PLAYOFFS

Consistent Curry doubles Warriors' lead

Stephen Curry scored 33 points to turn back another fine performance by James Harden, and the Golden State Warriors held off the Houston Rockets 99-98 on Thursday night to take a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference finals.

Harden rallied the Rockets from 17 points down in the second quarter and had a chance to finish off the comeback in the final seconds of the fourth. Instead, Klay Thompson and Curry trapped Harden, who lost the ball as time expired. Harden fell to the floor and put his hands over his head as the Warriors celebrated on the court, the sellout crowd roared and golden-yellow confetti fell from the rafters.

Harden had 38 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, and Dwight Howard overcame a sprained left knee that slowed him down to finish with 19 points and 17 rebounds for a Rockets team headed home in a major hole. Game 3 is Saturday in Houston. Curry, the NBA MVP, made five 3-pointers to go with six assists and three rebounds. He got a big boost from his teammates — notably Andrew Bogut, Draymond Green and Thompson — to regroup after the Warriors lost the big lead in the first half.

But the Warriors pulled ahead again late in the fourth quarter because of Curry — with his shot and his passes. Curry connected on a 3-pointer, then found Bogut under the rim for a layup

Harden, the MVP runner-up, kept finding ways to draw fouls and brought Houston back on free throws. He then found Howard for an alley-oop that sliced Golden State's lead to 99-98 with 33 seconds remaining. Harrison Barnes missed a difficult reverse layup as the shot clock nearly expired. Harden got the ball down the court, but was trapped by Thompson and Curry. Time expired amid the scramble for the ball. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry again showed his All-Star quality by netting 33 points THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/R BOWMER

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IN BRIEF

Canada's women rugby 7s close to making Olympics
The Canadian women's rugby sevens team can book its ticket to the 2016 Olympics this weekend in Amsterdam as the Women's World Series wraps up for the season.

The top four teams at the end of play Saturday automatically qualify for Rio de Janeiro, where rugby sevens will make its Games debut. New Zealand leads the series with Canada and Australia tied for second.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Briscoe to replace Hinchcliffe in Indy 500
Ryan Briscoe will replace the injured James Hinchcliffe in the Indianapolis 500.

Briscoe arrived in Indianapolis on Wednesday, just in time to get fitted for the car, and headed onto the track for the first time Thursday for a familiarization session. The former Indy 500 pole winner will practise in traffic for the first time Friday.

Hinchcliffe was injured in a wreck during practice on Monday. Part of the car's suspension wound up piercing the tub and going through Hinchcliffe's upper leg. Hinchcliffe lost a lot of blood but underwent surgery and is expected to recover. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hernandez pleads not guilty to witness intimidation
Aaron Hernandez sported a new 'Lifetime' neck tattoo at his arraignment in Boston on charges he tried to silence a witness in a double murder case against him by shooting the man in the face.

Hernandez pleaded not guilty Thursday on a witness intimidation charge in the shooting of Alexander Bradley. Hernandez has already been given life for shooting Odin Lloyd. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp honey
- ½ tsp minced garlic
- ½ tsp minced ginger
- 3 Tbsp water
- 4 cup chopped baby bok choy
- ¾ cup grated carrot
- 4 oz baby cocktail shrimp
- 10 endive leaves
- ¼ cup chopped green onions

Directions

1. To make the sauce: In a small bowl mix peanut butter, lemon juice, soy sauce, honey, garlic, ginger and water until smooth.

2. In a large skillet sprayed with vegetable oil, add bok choy and stir fry for 3 minutes or just until soft. Add carrots, shrimp and half of the peanut sauce and cook for 1 minute until warm.

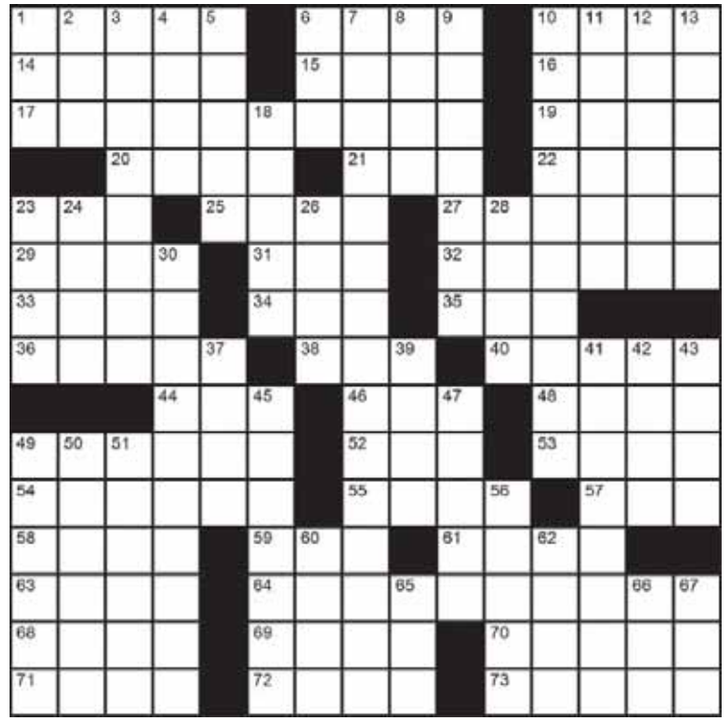
3. Spoon into endive leaves and drizzle with remaining sauce. Garnish with green onions.

Nutrition per serving (recipe serves 10)
- Calories 50
- Carbohydrates 5 g
- Fibre 1 g
- Protein 5 g
- Fat 1.5 g
- Sodium 190 mg

PHOTO: ROSE REISMAN

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Ready to rock
6. Gladiator's 1700
10. Melancholy
14. __-eyed
15. Of an important time
16. -Dokey's pal
17. Canadian director, Denis __ (His film at #7-Down is a contender for #3-Down)
19. BC footballer
20. Slight
21. Belg. neighbour
22. 'I' and 'M' of IMO
23. Fizzle
25. Chg. card printout
27. Canadian actor Mr. Garber of #7-Down
29. Halts
31. Esthero's "__ _ in Need of a Musical Revolution"
32. From times-of-yore
33. Glaswegian
34. Schedule acronym
35. Un-high
36. Jeweller's meas.
38. Young newt
40. Sci-Fi flick extra
44. __ _ few rounds (Spar)
46. Swell/ducky
48. Pace
49. Missing
52. 'Favour' suffix
53. Kardashians momager
54. On the ball: 2 wds.
55. Capri pants, __-length
57. Founded [abbr.]
58. Epithet for Athena
59. Get permission
61. Norway's patron saint
63. "Freak on a Leash" nu metal band
64. Food trucks specializing in french fries: 2 wds.
68. Crossed out
69. Juliette's "The English Patient" (1996) role
70. Freshwater fish
71. Rivers: Spanish
72. Hen's hatchables
73. Watched: 2 wds.

DOWN
1. Rugged vehicle, commonly
2. Pai __, "Kill Bill: Vol. 2" (2004) character
3. Big prize at the Cannes Film Festival: 2 wds.
4. Writer, __ Stanley Gardner
5. Hair tint workers
6. Michie __, Canadian rapper
7. Starring Emily Blunt, what "Sicario" (2015) is about: 2 wds.
8. Bat's hangout
9. Quebec municipality northwest of Rouyn-Noranda near the Ontario border
10. Criminal investigation component: 2 wds.
11. Similar/related: 2 wds.
12. Canadian sculptor whose work is featured in Winnipeg's Assiniboine Park: 2 wds.
13. __ Skynyrd
18. Food packaging meas.: 2 wds.
23. Office table
24. Empire of yore
26. Olivia Newton-John's "Let __ __ There"
28. The Munsters' pet bat
30. Behind-the-scenes theatre people
37. Ms. Braxton
39. Brit's bye-bye
41. Neil Simon play, __ in the Park
42. Mr. Redding
43. Examination
45. Business tote, __ case
47. Under
49. More less asleep, say
50. Neil Simon play, __ Blues
51. "Connected" by __ MC's
56. Shoes to switch into after a night of partying
60. __ carpet
62. Taj Mahal's site
65. Not: French
66. Stubby pencil
67. Barn abode

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Venus, planet of harmony, is under pressure today but that does not mean you will be too. You will be okay if you refuse to let problems of a domestic nature get you down.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Yes, you appear to have a very thick skin but the fact is you are as easily upset as anyone else and what someone says today may hurt you immensely. Don't take it seriously and try to forgive them.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Chances are you will splash out on something that catches your eye today, only to regret it over the weekend when you realize how much it has cost and how little you now have available for other activities. Return it and get a refund.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
If you throw yourself into a new project today there is every possibility you will be looking for a way to get out of it tomorrow, so think before you act. There are enough existing projects that need to be finished.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
The most important thing today and over the weekend is that you make sure that those you help are those who most deserve your help. It's a sad fact of life that some people are happy to live on others' efforts rather than their own.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You must not allow your personal feelings to interfere with what needs to be done on the work front today. Some things are business and some things are personal.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Someone in a position of authority may be annoying but you need to remember that they have more power than you. You will sometimes have to make it look as if you agree.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Although Venus is moving through one of the best areas of your chart you still need to be careful, especially when traveling and socializing. You may be confident that you can handle anything that comes your way but don't tempt fate.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If you make a small change in one thing today the effects are likely to be much bigger than you expected, so act with care and, if in doubt, don't act at all. Nothing is so important that it has to be dealt with immediately.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If life seems too complicated of late it is most likely because you are making it too complicated. How do you make it simpler? Do less — a lot less. Cut back to essentials.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
The planets indicate you could fall for someone today or over the weekend who, to say the least, is not really suitable. Have a fling if you must but don't expect the relationship to last.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You may be able to do a particular task better than just about anyone, but that does not mean you should do it. You have more than enough on the go as it is at the moment, so don't add to your load. Colleagues must share the burden.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

					6		9	
		3			8			5
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	3		5					

Difficulty Level ★★★

5/30

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